

Small group reports
Deacon Formation That Works
20 March 2009

Presentations

Donald Richey

Offering a seminary model for development, the best practice Donald presented centered around a reflective course in theology. Learners are asked to connect the theological ideas to practical application. Two books are used for the course, Magliore and MacIntosh are the two authors. Papers are assigned on a practical application and a panel reviews the results. The process connects CPE reflection in a theological way to practical applications of crises where the learner makes theological connections.

Susan Naylor

The program uses a gather-scatter model where those engaged in learning meet regularly and then scatter, taking ideas with them and use them in their praxis. Over a weekend, learners gather on Friday night, have dinner, lecture and compline. Saturdays consist of a morning continuing a didactic engagement with canonical areas and the afternoons are spent in reflection and application. A listserv is used so participants may stay in touch with one another during their scatter periods.

John Struthers

Described the best practice in his program in terms of discernment. A three pronged approach is used for the congregation to discern their need for diaconal minister, and the pre-postulant in a group discerns a personal call. When a personal call is affirmed but a congregational call is not affirmed the aspirant is given an alternative opportunity in a different congregation but the whole process is repeated.

Diana Luck

Cross-cultural ministry

A new course in the school affirms ethnic diversity and some flexibility exists to provide other opportunities for learning on issues such as sexual orientation, AIDS ministry, etc. Diana has a copy of the syllabus which she is willing to share.

Report from Maryland, Virginia and Arkansas

Maryland:

Due to a "gap" between selection and the beginning of coursework (The months of December-September), the deacons in Maryland complete a community-based independent study with reflection prior to beginning any coursework. Students make a list of social problems within the vicinity of their parish, make a list of issues, identify resources, investigate the groups within the Episcopal church which study such problems (eg. ERD, EPPN etc.). Each student selects one issue with which she/he is unfamiliar and does a report for the other students when formation classes begin.

Benefits:

Increased exposure to different groups in the Episcopal structure: empowers student to become an expert on a area of social concern, links the student back to the Baptismal covenant of service and systemic change.

Virginia:

Deacon candidates and laity both take part in the Episcopal Leadership Institute(ELI). One formation weekend in 4 is spent on leadership development and is taught by ELI. One of the requirements to complete leadership training is the completion of an integrative project within their assigned parish.

Benefits:

Empowers the student to recognize and value the leadership skills that they bring; allows deacons and laity to recognize skill sets that they have in common; speaks to the empowerment of all person (lay and ordained) for ministry; helps to connect with the Baptismal Covenant by honoring the development of skill in oneself rather than the "needy other."

Arkansas:

Competency-based model of education. Students are able to pass competencies in ways that fit their situations. Each student works with a mentor and a teaching chaplain. The independent learning is augmented by quarterly meetings to offer community-building

Virginia:

David Perkins has developed an evaluation form for the competencies required in each of the five canonical areas. He is willing to share this document.

At our table: Eugenia Dowdeswell, Bobbie Armstrong, Bill Joyner, Eilene Warwick, Patricia Reynolds, Robert Reynolds, Audrey Delafield

Western North Carolina: Discernment for baptismal ministry led by a new deacon in a parish After one year in formation with traditional academic classes, and a second year with hands-on community work, the deacons are ordained and sent to a parish different from the one that raised them up. During this third year, they go through a program with a group from this parish (selected in various ways, with help from the rector) . The idea is to pass on to this group, and to the baptized community at large, how to discern their gifts for ministry, how will they go out to do ministry in the world, how to explore what assets for ministry are available, how to assess community needs, etc. The deacons are prepared for this during the two-year formation. The deacon class continues to come together periodically (once each six weeks) after ordination to share their experiences with this process – what's working, what's not working, etc. The idea is to have the deacons live into their ministry not by being "lone rangers" and doing ministry, but by awakening and leading the baptized in discovering and exercising their ministry. There is a manual for this and the archdeacon monitors each deacon's progress. At the end of the year about half the deacons stay there and half go back to their original parish.

Maine: Mentoring

Several dioceses had mentoring programs and good aspects of each were a takeaway for the group. In Maine, Newly ordained deacons are assigned older deacons as mentors. They meet face to face three times in the first three months. In the next two years, they get together face to face if possible, or on the telephone. They exchange information on their ministry, practical questions, etc. Western North Carolina assigns similar mentors but at the postulancy stage. North Carolina assigns mentors from the Commission on Ministry to aspirants and postulants; there is a internship program in a parish that is part of the discernment process.

Hawaii: Dispersed deacons/candidates

Discussed the renewing formation program in Hawaii where the bishop wants "a deacon in every parish" and suggested various means of remote learning and community-building (Skype, web conferencing, etc.)

North Carolina: Combining educational resources

The diocese has a School for Ministry which runs various programs, workshops, classes, etc, the Deacon School; and a self-sustaining Servant Leadership School run out of a Greensboro parish. Discussed the possible benefits and concerns about a sharing of resources of these schools to produce more of a critical mass of students, reducing costs, and creating more vibrant programs in the face of economic challenges, unpredictable numbers of postulants entering the deacon formation program, etc. Possible umbrella "Partnership for Christian Studies."

CPE

Discussion of whether CPE is required in some places. North Carolina has it optional but does have a required course "Pastoral Care and Theological Reflection" which is taught by a priest and

CPE supervisor and is considered by many in the class to be the most valuable and popular part of the formation.

Other topics discussed:

How to locate and encourage those who may have a call to the diaconate

How to make congregations more aware of deacons

Deacons' discretionary funds, expenses, and compensation

At our table there was a Mississippi deacon, a member of the Chicago task force and Deacons from NorthWest PA, Central PA , Chicago and Oregon.

We were to use the questions provided:

Share practices that work?

Why does it work?

How do you know it works?

How does this practice relate to the principles of deacon formation?

In the **Diocese of Louisiana** their course of preparation is three years. In the first year of postulancy after reading Ormond Plater's book and studying it, a field project in the community is required.

The deacons are sent into the community during month 7-11 to find something in the world where the deacon postulant will be working with the marginalized under supervision. During this process they learn to become self-starters, learn to self-evaluate, and receive and react to a supervisor's evaluation.

During this time the deacon postulant meets monthly for formation around the field project, have some education around the area of the field project. They read and comment in writing on books they are reading relating to the project.

They write up the project in detail stating the goals and objectives. They must have someone help them evaluate what's going on. There is also a weekly process form.

There is a final reflection paper stating what you did, the goals, theology etc.

Finally the deacon postulant is to write an article for their parish newsletter on what they did and bring these concerns to the church during every opportunity to preach or speak.

The director is currently doing this project for the fourth time.

How do you know that it works- The people get excited about doing it and continually want to share their experiences?

Going through the principles of this project-

- Competency
- Lots of documentation is received
- Holistic- throughout the whole program
- Integrative- all included
- Collaborative- with the folks in the social agencies involved
- Flexible and innovative- this is done in their home locations and they report back to a central location
- Focused on adult learning- is accountable in the reports
- The journal they write shows theological reflection
- It is definitely community based
- The baptismal covenant is gone over before they begin and they reflect on this in written work and is obviously relevant to this work

- Contextual- yes
- Assessment opportunities-definitely
- Clearly they are discerning
- In this model there is spirituality in worship around their projects

Northwestern Pa.

This diocese is not able to contribute as their process is very new and is just getting off the ground. The formation process is currently in disarray.

The Diocese of Oregon

The process and formation is in disarray. The bishop was not following through with the diaconal process. The representative is here to learn how to re-organize the program.

The Diocese of Chicago

The representative is not involved in the school and the ministry and formation program. Please see notes shared by Sue Nebel

The Diocese of Central Pa.

The Diocese has a school of Christian Studies and the program begins with the Exploring Your Ministry Program. During this program there is the Discovery of Gifts Weekend. These two have both been very successful in helping folks to discern their ministry. Brochures are available on the table with regard to both these programs.

The representative stated that following this discernment process the student proceeds to the Commission on Ministry or not depending on whether they feel the call to ordained ministry or enhanced lay ministry.

During the internship 6-9 months in a parish not their own or during the year of candidacy the deacon candidate or postulant must complete the Experiential project. This project helps the candidate to rally folks from the congregation to work in the community on a project. They must seek vestry approval, raise money if needed for the project. Written papers during three phases of the project are required which tell how the project is going-stating both positive and negative aspects. The papers also are to include reflective parts in order for the person to write about their feelings, concerning successes or not, how the project was received by the organization and or the volunteers involved.

There is a final evaluation paper which ties all aspects of the project up.

It was determined by the group that all the aspects of the Principles of Deacon Formation were met in this Experiential project as they listened to the presentation and they are getting used to applying them to what they were listening to following the example given for the Louisiana project.

Mississippi reflections

The deacon began by telling his story and then reflected on the surprising differences and disparities around the church in deacon formation. We went through the guide lines and principles with regard to their diaconal process which began in 1995. It was decided by the group that Mississippi passes as all the principles are included in their program.

Small Group Report (Jan Weber, Dennis Taylor, Jim Lancaster, Scott Ellsworth, Steve Owen, Rose Bogal-Allbritten, Richard Buhner)

Community Formation: (Diocese of Olympia) Formation of deacons in community to counter the fact that they are perpetual "outsiders" in a congregation. They gather 6 times a year (3 weekends/3 Saturdays) to form a community of mutual support. This has developed in the deacons an appreciation of the need for community rather than "lone ranger" deacons who burn out. The current bishop requires that the deacons gather and he is with them, so this sense of community continues after ordination. Formation consists of internal conversion (how does one

need to change for this new role in the church); content/education and field placement. **Core principles: community based.**

Discernment in Community (Diocese of Idaho) Discernment in community using “Listening Hearts”—this is done throughout the diocese. Priest and deacons are formed together and they tend to work together more effectively. Does away with an “us—them” mentality. **Core principles: community based, innovative and flexible**

Pastoral Theological Education as an Alternative to CPE (Diocese of Kentucky) During the second year of the School of Ministry, participants spend 200 hours in a setting in which they can engage in pastoral care (e.g., long term care facilities, community shelter, counseling, food pantries, jails). Each participant has an onsite supervisor who spends one hour per week in supervision; the group piece takes place on a monthly basis during School of Ministry sessions—during this time, students present cases (similar to the CPE verbatim approach) and do an educational presentation to the group on some topic that they have “mastered” during their time at the agency. **Core principles: innovation/flexibility, community based**

External Fieldwork Placement in another Congregation and in a Community Agency (Diocese of Vancouver) Participants spend 9 months in a congregation other than their own. They begin this congregational placement with a letter of agreement (required). They spend another nine month period at a community agency. These two experiences are the core pieces of training; the academic piece can be done in a variety of ways (EfM, CALL or a local ecumenical seminary). The practice part of the program “fills in around” the academic part of the program. **Core principles: innovative/flexible**

Continuing Formation Groups (School for Deacons) Continuing formation groups are required by all of the dioceses participating in the School for Deacons (6 hours per semester). The formation groups are area-based and continue for 2 years after ordination. **Core principles: community based, collaborative (between dioceses and between those in formation and those who have been ordained).**

Table Discussion – What Works
March 20, 2009

<p>John Titus Diocese of Atlanta mojotitus@bellsouth.net</p>	<p><u>We Think</u> it works Wanted sufficient immersion in the ministries of the poor and homeless to use as a discernment mechanism to decide whether person should continue</p> <p>Parish discernment 12 now 10 Phase lasts 6 months Initial meeting – intros, spiritual biographies Ministry exp and service expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 hours per month • 4 required component • Run by the cathedral feet on the street – city’s largest pro • Go to the underbelly – non-sheltered living connections • Church of the Common Ground (16 hours) – community of faith that meets every Sunday in a downtown park; Eucharist, small office nearby – Help with the Eucharist, serve food to participants 2) healing service and lead a bible study <p>Other half: elective ministries (choose from 7 approved ministry programs) – food, prison, employment readiness, homeless, inner city, residential community (radical Christianity)</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meeting, write 2 reflection papers (1 on required, 1 on elective) <p>Persons involved with discernment are encouraged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections are good and getting better • Reflections indicate that experience stretches the people • Conversation has grown more robust • Relates to the following principles: integrative, collaborative, flexible, focused on adult learning, theological reflection, community-based, relevant to the Christian mission, related to discernment. <p>Diocese announces we are starting a new class -> application -> apps reviewed and persons selected -> parish priest -> parish discernment committee (that's the 10 of 12) -> then this experience -> >3 people running program evaluate and recommend to the Commission on Ministry.</p> <p>Mississippi Deacon – reality check Sounds like a wonderful program; 16 hours per month 5 months doing stuff; 6th month is meetings, reflections and evaluation; do weekend;</p>
<p>Jim Visger Diocese of Nebraska</p>	<p>In the process of redesigning, started with dismantling Defining the role of the Deacon Meets with the Parish Vestry and the Priest to discuss and explain the role of the deacon Has a document defining what the deacon may or may not do.</p>
<p>Kate Salinaro Diocese of California School for Deacons</p> <p>Field Education Handbook available by writing to Kate Deaconk1@comcast.net</p>	<p>Serves 4 diocese for deacon formation (Does have students who fly in for weekends) She is paid by the school</p> <p><u>Report is on Field Education</u> Been doing this for 15 years, with con Occurs in 2nd and 3rd years of formation 1 year in site of choice, 1 year at parish (not home) Start with orientation night – expectations, forms, ?what do you think you're going to get out of this? Helps focus, have a list of possible sites She has to approve field work site Requires 2 resumes of secular work and church work Students tend to be more prepared, knowledge & experiences, than were in previous years Challenge is challenging the students so that they can stretch Have prerequisites for the students, like diocesan certificate child abuse and racist training. Each diocese has a different requirement – CA has 2 years in a parish, not home, with a social ministry Now doing more multi-ethnic ministry 8 hours per week at a social ministry or 8 hours at the parish (the intensive academic work is done in the first year) Meet every 3 weeks (Sat 7:45 am to Sunday 3:30 pm) Has a lay committee during the parochial field work She make site visits to all the places they go (social ministry and parochial sites) She's also there if something goes wrong</p>

	<p>Learning contract – not set in stone, can adjust as time goes on and circumstances change Evaluation reports Whole year of social ministries to learn about all the possibilities, learn about how to set up and get things started Student does a site evaluation about the site itself.</p> <p>[Vestry also signs off on Ministry Agreement at placement]</p> <p>Reality Check:</p>
<p>Frank Spencer Diocese of Mississippi</p>	<p>2 year school – person who is already a deacon so less emphasis on academics; meet every other weekend CPE meets once a month – takes one of the class meetings in the month Some years ago, the bishop decided that Deacons should have Church Pastoral Education (CPE) 480 hour program – the work is in the church, At the beginning of the program, based on experiences in their church or their community 9-month program, integrated with academic work Now school is 2 ½ years because of the amount of time needed for CPE Could start CPE in the summer before school starts Benefit – for putting triangulation out of the way and defining boundaries in the church setting Field placement in a church (5-months) after the 2 academic years</p>
<p>Liz Ostuni Diocese of Newark</p>	<p>Last deacon ordained in 2006, not formation program since 2005 New bishop called moratorium on discernment and formation for ordained, both priest and Deacon Formation part still to be addressed, very academic Requires CPE for both priests and deacons 5 hospitals in the diocese have CPE programs For deacon formation, agreed that it so valuable that should be in the beginning of the formation process, while they are still discerning with their local parish community Student has to pay for program themselves, is about \$700 to \$800. Student has to initiate application. If not accepted in CPE program, would have difficulty going through the deacon discernment process. CPE supervisor recommended for ordination when was done at the end of the formation program. Program was initially designed to have a 9-month social service internship and 9-month parochial internship. Now social service ministry will be 3-month (25 hours each). And parochial = 6 months (also 25 hours each). Academic program = 3 years, night school, Newark school of theology – Discernment + CPE → approved? = yes → Formation of 3 years</p>
<p>Victoria Mason Chair for the Committee for the Diaconate vmason@austin.rr.com</p>	<p>2003 announcement to start the deacon program in the diocese First class started in 2004 Iona School for Ministry structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For bi-vocational priests/deacons • Also develop lay leadership training <p>Now have a curriculum developer who is a Deacon Most instructors are priests and/or professors Always have a “deacon-in-residence” at school Deacons and priest trained together</p>

	Collaborative Mission-oriented Innovative Community based training
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Take Away Items:

Use of theological reflection – placing our theology out in the open to be integrated with the other; learning how to do that;

Importance of experiential rather than just academic

And integrating them together

Friday, 10 AM What Works Discussion -- Bob
 Snow, Chicago Group Rep.

Frederick Erickson, Reporter

Diocese of Minnesota--Mary Jo Feely

9-12 month internship in a new setting for ministry. Starts in the second of three years of formation. Usually this involves placement in a parish, sometimes in an institutional ministry. Why it works--integrative, experiential

Diocese of Southern Ohio--Karl Ruttan

Field placement in a parish during the second and third years of a three year process of formation. Reporting and supervision is especially thorough, with responsibility for the reporting primarily resting on the student. The rector in the field parish is the supervisor, who meets with the student at least once a month, usually twice a month. The student also has a mentor for the field experience who is a deacon and the student and mentor meet once a month. Often the field experience parish is the one in which the student, once ordained, will serve as a deacon. There is a careful contracting process for what the student will do within the congregation and also within the local community. Ruttan has developed simple guidelines for the placement and a simple reporting form, jointly written and jointly signed, for each review meeting between the student and the supervisor so that there is a paper record of the ongoing assessment and reflection on the fieldwork experience. This record is submitted to the commission on ministry as part of the student's dossier. Why it works--integrative, experiential, collaborative.

Missionary Diocese of the Dominican Republic--Bob Snow, Alex Romero

Recently completed six year formation process with six in formation. They all came from the city of Santo Domingo--three women and three men-- and had known one another since they were children. Because of their prior acquaintance and geographic proximity they were able to study and pray together throughout the entire formation process and since ordination they continue to meet. Why it works--collaborative, flexible and innovative.

Diocese of Los Angeles--Frederick Erickson

Students in our formation program usually attend one of four seminaries in our metropolitan area where part time (weekend) study is possible, and a few study full time for one year at CDSP. One of our local seminaries is the Episcopal emphasis area within the Claremont School of Theology. Two others are evangelical seminaries and one is Roman Catholic. None of the "classic" seminary courses presents specifically diaconal content, and students attending those courses do not have much opportunity to meet with others in their formation cohort. Accordingly we created a "Diakonia Seminar" that meets at our Cathedral Center for a Saturday morning and afternoon every other month between September and June. Three aspects of this experience are especially successful. One is the creation of community--a safe space for mutual help--among those in formation. A second aspect is connection between those in formation and deacons

currently serving in a variety of diaconal ministries--on a regular basis ordained deacons visit the seminar and discuss their own formation and current ministries with the seminar participants. A third aspect is hands-on experience in distinctively diaconal roles in liturgy--how to carry the Gospel Book and open it so you don't look uncomfortable, how to read the Gospel so it is a distinct event within the Eucharist, how to set the Table, how to sing the Exsultet and Gospel. Why it works--integrative, experiential, collaborative--and the instructors on various aspects of "diaconia" are deacons.

Diocese of Mississippi--Penny Sisson, Bobby Weathersby

This was a discussion of what didn't work and why. In their formation program the traditional academic study worked adequately, with once a month classes on Saturday, but "formation" was handled by a Friday night meeting before each Saturday session. The evening meeting was led by a deacon and it turned into a "cocktail party" rather than a situation of genuine sharing and support.

Self-directed study in social issues – Chicago

There was a need to shorten the time in the classroom during the summer. This self-directed study is made up of the following:

1. Brief reflection on what you know about social issues
2. Make a visit to the Episcopal Charities Agency in Chicago. See what the church is doing. Make a report to the class.
3. Look at own community to find out the needs. Compile a file and keep it at your parish.
4. Do an indepth study on one of these needs, attitudes of the community, etc. This could possibly lead to involvement in this area.

This study seems to have been effective since some do better because they are not in the classroom.

A good way to form community - Flint, MI

Invite two members, possibly more, from discernment team or parish to join postulate during one or all of the deacon classes. Those who come also buy books and participate in the classes. When those who have been visiting are finished, they report to the parish about what they have learned about the diaconate. This leads to a better relationship between the deacon and the parish. There is also a chance of sparking interest in someone who joined the postulate in class or someone who benefited from the report.

Cross-Cultural ministry – Dallas, TX

Build relationships across cultural lines by raising awareness of cultural biases and reflecting on what is talked about. (This is self-directed.)

Choose a different culture and visit with people in that group. Attend a function, church service, etc. that these people are involved in. Write observations in a journal. Then talk about these observations in class. Do a research paper on the use/misuse of power in the church and your personal life. This goes beyond anti-racism class in that it is more experiential.

Day on the Diaconate –MS

Once a year, the Bishop, members of the diocesan discernment council, newly ordained deacons, more experienced deacons, and perhaps a priest who has a deacon in his/her parish meet with anyone who is interested in finding out more about the diaconate. Spouses and parish discernment committee members are also welcome to attend. The Bishop makes a short

address to those present. Then there are explanations of the different parts of the deaconate process along with time for questions and answers. Refreshments are served.

An alternate to CPE program

Where traditional CPE isn't available, guidelines have been developed for an alternate pastoral care program. Supervisors might include those experienced in CPE or pastoral care. Even though, this will not be a certified course, if your diocese will accept it, it will help in teaching the process. The cost is also much less.

Table Discussion – What Works – March 20 – NAAD Conference

<i>Presented by</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Why does it work/Reality check (from Mississippi deacon)</i>	<i>Principles</i>
Diocese of Indianapolis	<p>Early experiences: shadowing, discernment session, summer experience.</p> <p>Aspirants complete an 8-12 week shadowing experience with a deacon at a parish other than their home parish. The shadowing parish, ideally, is unlike their home church, e.g., suburban/urban, ethnic diversity, size, etc. The aspirant observes the deacon in worship, meetings and other assignments and prepares a mid-point and final report/reflection on the experience. Shadowing experiences also include one-on-one time with the deacon for conversation. Aspirants also participate in a discernment process using the Listening Hearts model and their parish forms a Congregational Discernment Group that meets over a 6-8 month period and they continues to provide support to the postulant during the formation process.</p>	<p>These early experiences have been available for various lengths of time, some for years, and receive very positive feedback from aspirants/postulants. They aid in discernment and help answer the question: can I see myself doing this? They push outside the comfort zone and outside their own congregation. They provide feedback.</p> <p><u>Reality check:</u> has the summer experience or any of the other activities ever 'scared off' a promising aspirant, e.g., a prison ministry experience?</p> <p><u>Response:</u> there's lots of flexibility in</p>	<p>Integrative Flexible Collaboration Community-based Life-long learning Diakonal identity Discernment Assessment opportunities Relevant to church mission</p>

<i>Presented by</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Why does it work/Reality check (from Mississippi deacon)</i>	<i>Principles</i>
	To make use of the time between being named a postulant (early spring) and starting the formation program (early fall), they have the opportunity for a summer experience which is designed to give increased understanding of the diaconate. The experience is flexible and may be experience working along side a deacon in a non-parish ministry, e.g., prison ministry, a program of reading and reflection, or an experience proposed by the postulant. The summer experience oversight is by the Archdeacon who also assigns the shadowing. The discernment experiences are arranged by the Listening Hearts community and the CoM.	the options available. Experience so far is that this hasn't happened.	
Diocese of Michigan	Candidate practicum. The problem: a pattern of new deacons having problems with their assignments. (The problem is usually between the priest and deacon or the deacon and the bishop.) The candidate practicum was developed, a 9-12 month temporary assignment prior to ordination but done at the church where the permanent assignment is anticipated. The archdeacon meets with the rector & deacon every three months during the	Has increased priests' understanding of deacons. Increased communication between deacons and archdeacon. Gives priest and deacon opportunity for communication and collaboration. Provides support from archdeacon. Similar to transitional deacon experience. Provides a needed support system.	Flexible Collaborative Focus on leadership development Wholistic Integrative Assessment opportunity Discernment

<i>Presented by</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Why does it work/Reality check (from Mississippi deacon)</i>	<i>Principles</i>
	temporary assignment. A contract is developed at the start of the practicum specifying deacon duties including carrying the Gospel, preaching, prayers of the people, attending vestry, outreach, etc. The deacon writes three integration papers, one each on understanding of the deacon in outreach, spirituality and liturgy. At the end of the candidate practicum they can stay at the church or be assigned elsewhere.	Similar to student teaching in educational environments. <u>Reality check:</u> all deacons need a gradual transition from ‘sitting in the pew’ to ordination. As lay persons they can gain experience being in front of the congregation as readers, etc., so that having a presence in front of the congregation is not new to them.	
Diocese of the River Grande	Aspirant Interview Team. The Aspirant Interview Team (AIT) is a panel consisting of a deacon, a member of the Standing Cmte., chair of the CoM, a psychiatrist and the diocesan deployment officer. The AIT interviews all applying for Holy Orders (deacon & priest) and is considered part of discernment. The AIT makes a recommendation to the CoM. Deacon small groups (“Deacon coffee klatch”). The archdeacon convenes small groups of recently ordained deacons for community building among deacons; this is done by geographic clusters and	Builds experience in interviewing. Aids in discernment. Focuses on call. Helps prevent ‘lone ranger’ problem with newly assigned deacons. Builds community. Reality check:	Flexible Innovative Adult learning Contextual Community based Competency based

<i>Presented by</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Why does it work/Reality check (from Mississippi deacon)</i>	<i>Principles</i>
	where a deacon is in an isolated area of the diocese the archdeacon meets one-on-one. Provides support and aids in building leaders, not just doers.	Provides a solution to a problem.	
Diocese of Northern California	Field placement. The field placement is two years: one year in a social service agency, one year in a parish. Can be flexed based on postulant's background. Usually assigned where there is a deacon present. Priest and deacon at participating parish given guidelines for the fieldwork. The experience is flexible about what the student does, including startup of new outreach/programs/broadens experience with familiar ministries. Parishes very supportive of student deacons. Parish and parish deacon mentor students. Processing of experience is done with other fieldwork students in a group. Each student does a fieldwork report at conclusion of fieldwork. New deacons usually assigned to their home parish after ordination.	Broadening experience for student – taking him/her away from home church. Buildings community Parishes have a stake in student's success.	Integrative Flexible All of the principles!
Diocese of Toronto	Situational discussion. Diocesan formation program is carried out via seminaries and online. Students often come to formation who already have an MDiv or EFM. Small group work includes situational	Helps focus and work through situations that can occur. Small groups work well. Integrates real world situations.	Wholistic Integrative Competency-based Life-long learning

<i>Presented by</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Why does it work/Reality check (from Mississippi deacon)</i>	<i>Principles</i>
	discussion questions. [Note: Jacquie will share questions via email on request.]		

Group Notes from NAAD Directors' Conference, 2009

Something that works in your context

[Louisiana]

In second year of formation, students are assigned to a congregation not-their-own for a nine month period during which they are to design and initiate a ministry program that will endure after they have left.

Ideally, a parish with no deacon.

Learning objectives are set together with the Formation Director, Rector of the parish, Regular reporting is expected.

There is periodic reflection on the experience with a group of peers

All participants have deacon mentors.

Even if program falters or fails, students identify, articulate, and reflect on learning from the experience.

[Mississippi]

Doing CPE [Church Pastoral Education at the very beginning of the formation program.

The "work" is in diaconal ministry settings, with processing and reflection in the formation group. There is a CPE certified supervisor.

Duration is 200 hours over 9 months.

The group bonds and becomes mutually supportive.

Participants develop key interpersonal skills.

SW Fla

Clear roles for the Standing Committee, the Commission on Ministry, the School.

The Program

Year 1 = Religious Studies [primarily academic work]

Year 2 = applied learning

Year 3 = spiritual formation, then ordination

Cooperate with another diocese [Central Fla.] where students can take courses if local offering is missed or doesn't fit schedule.

Program is mix of academic and experiential

Classes are full day: Eucharist, class, lunch, class, compline: twice a month.

General learning strategy: read book, attend class/discuss, write paper applying learning in diaconal ministry context..

Discernment always in and begins with congregation. Not self-nomination.

[Minnesota]

Why shouldn't formation be like what we are doing now?

Described a formation process that proceeded as a group gathered around a table with a series of tutors and mentors. Its primary modality was, "fostering conversations among us." We read books and articles, wrote papers, took tests, but still all around the table.

Took longer than didactic classroom.

Key leaders were 2 deacons and 1 priest.

A spiritual care leader set the agenda of the Spirit in the midst of the group.

Process means trusting the Holy Spirit.

Fosters openness, willingness.

Sample process

- Read some church history

- From a reading list developed for the program

- Each participant reports on a chapter

- All take a test

- Test answers reviewed by the Board of Examining Chaplains

Cites the power of building a collaborative learning group.

Group continued for several years and it was easy to incorporate new participants.

[Huron]

Two-year post-ordination formation process

Overcoming a "you're on your own" pattern

Deal with issues of remaining in congregation from which you came.

Network and learn from other deacons

Do some continuing education

Work with the bishop

Follows very structured academic program done at one [or all] of three universities in the southern half of the diocese [London, U.W.Ont., Windsor, Kitchener, U. Waterloo].

10 subject areas required. Study on own. Relate to a mentor.

Then ordained.

What Really Stands Out [can't wait to try back home]

- Begin formation with intense group process and skill building.

- [for bonding, capacity for collaboration, and group skills for ministry.]

- Student field placement in a parish for nine-month project.

- Broaden discernment process beyond congregation.